

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please rewrite the second full paragraph on page 3 (lines 15-20) of the specification as follows:

Damascene processes such as the ones described above pose significant problems. One of the problems is caused by the use of one or more etch stop layers. The etch stop layers 15, ~~[[25]]~~ 29 prevent the damascene patterns 17, 18 from extending into or through the underlying layers 14, 10. Although the advantages of using the etch stop layers are significant, the process is complex since separate depositions are required for the etch stop layers.

Please rewrite the first full paragraph on page 17 (lines 1-7) of the specification as follows:

The material of choice for the fourth intermetal insulating layer ~~[[57a]]~~ 55a is also a low dielectric constant organic or inorganic material, with a dielectric constant lower than 4.0, as the ones listed above with reference to the first and second intermetal insulating layers 55, 57. For example, in the exemplary embodiment of the invention which employs the SILK/NANOGLASS combination described above, the fourth intermetal insulating layer 55a may be formed of SILK, which is the material of choice for the first insulating layer 55.